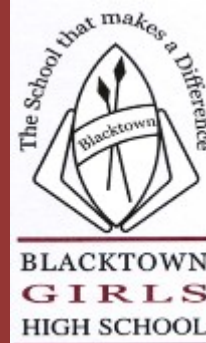


Blackchat

Parent Newsletter



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2017 Issue 2: Term 2

School Calendar

Key Dates: Term 3 2017

- 18 July: Term 3 begins
- 19 July: "Go for It"
Information Evening
- 24 July: Year 11 & 12
Vaccinations
- 27 July: Australian
Mathematics
Competition
- 1-2 August: ICAS English
Competition
- 2 August: Senior Showcase,
Jump Rope for
Heart
- 11 August: Formal Assembly
- 15 August: ICAS Mathematics
Competition
- 17 August: Book Week
Character Dress Up
Day
- 22 August: Stage 5 2018
Information
Evening
- 30 August: Parent-Teacher
Evening
- 5 September: Junior
Showcase
- 11 September: Year 11 Exams
Commence, Years
7 & 8 Gala Day
- 21 September: Year 12 Picnic and
Graduation Rehearsal
- 22 September: Year 12 Graduation,
Term 3 ends

Welcome to another edition of *Blackchat*! This term our students were quite busy in the creative and performing arts attending several excursions in the city, building their skills in special off-site workshop sessions and of course producing their own incredible works of art through drawing, painting, photography, song and dance. Our amazing students in the BRAG program were also active this term reviewing a wide variety of books to help guide the reading choices of their peers and promote discussion of popular literature. In addition, BRAG has developed a social media presence with YouTube, Instagram and Facebook pages chock-full of book reviews and information about literary events both around school and in the larger community. Here are some of the term highlights featured in this issue:

- Photography students visited the "Head On" exhibition at the Museum of Sydney and then explored the city, cameras in hand, snapping their own unique portrait shots.
- Art students travelled to the Lake Parramatta Reserve for a peaceful day of plein air painting, observing and capturing images of colour and light.
- Select Year 11 Art students attended a special workshop at the Dobell Drawing School, refining their charcoal drawing skills and collaborating with like-minded students from across Sydney.
- Dance students viewed an interactive hip hop dance performance called "Cypher" at the Sydney Opera House and chatted with the performers after the show, gaining valuable insight into the world of professional dance.
- Two talented senior Dance students were specially chosen to attend HSC Dance Masterclasses at the Sydney Dance Company
- The Dance Ensemble performed a musical theatre dance routine called "Join the Circus" inspired by the musical *Barnum* at The Evan Theatre in Penrith as part of the Synergy Dance Festival.
- The BGHS Choir joined 600 hundred voices to perform at the Sydney Town Hall in the Combined Secondary Schools Choir's annual concert.
- BRAG students offer their reviews of popular books including *All the Bright Places*, *The Fault in Our Stars*, *Our Chemical Hearts* and *Spark*.

Happy reading!

A Great Night and City Lights

Vivid Sydney is a unique annual event of light, music and ideas featuring an outdoor “gallery” of extraordinary lighting sculptures, a cutting-edge contemporary music program, some of the world's most important creative industry forums and, of course, the spectacular illumination of the Sydney Opera House sails.

A group of 15 students and their three art teachers, Ms Crous, Ms Gifford and Ms McDougall, visited the event on the evening of Tuesday 13th June. For many of the students it was their first time experiencing this multi-award-winning winter festival, which has grown into the largest of its kind in the world.

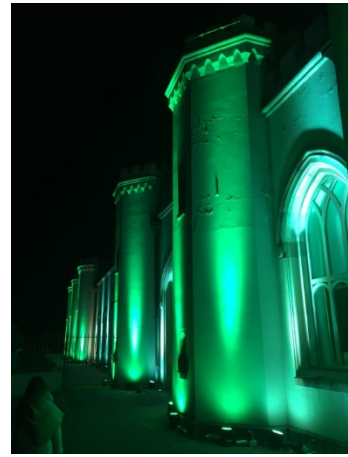
Catching the train from Blacktown, the small group disembarked at Circular Quay just in time for the light show to begin.

The projections on the Sydney Opera House and Museum of Contemporary Art wowed the spectators and began a pleasant evening strolling past the various light displays. The girls took a leisurely walk to the Opera House and then through the Botanical Gardens. Intermittent visual displays that included mirrored reflections, fish swimming between bamboo plants and ghost-like figures dotting the landscape promoted discussion while some brave students also participated in an interactive work that was initiated by them blowing into a circle.

A closer look at the Museum of Contemporary Art enabled all to experience the soundscape that accompanied the spectacular moving light display before purchasing a quick meal and returning home. At the end of a very busy term, the evening was a lovely way to wind down and celebrate.

Thank you to Ms Crous for taking the time to organise the excursion, which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who participated.





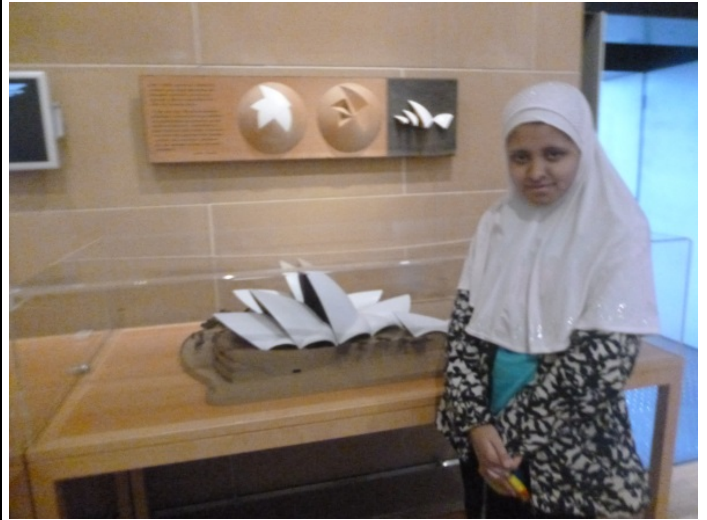
Heads Up for “Head On”

At the beginning of June, students studying Photography and Digital Media in Year 9 travelled by train to the Sydney CBD to view the “Head On” exhibition at the Museum of Sydney before engaging in their own photo shoot.

With Portraiture as their focus area for Term 2, the exhibition was a timely reminder that images of people can be far more than just an appearance. The exhibition featured a selection of portrait studies from international photographers depicting a variety of topics. With political, social and autobiographical works on display, the girls had a lot to consider and were keen to discuss how the authors had communicated their ideas. Some of the girls also took time out to investigate the Lego building room while others spent a few moments in quiet conversation to reflect on what they had seen.

The exhibition also acted as a stimulus for their own photo shoot. The students spent a couple of hours working with portrait shots around Circular Quay. As a busy hub of activity, there were many opportunities to add to their portfolios as well as a variety of architectural and environmental features that could be used as props for their staged images. The overcast weather provided excellent lighting on the day with many successful photographs being recorded for use back at school.





Plein Air Painting at Lake Parramatta

For Year 7, the first term consisted of a study of colour theory and relationships, concentrating on the work of the French Impressionists with a focus on Claude Monet.

The start of the second term saw this learning put into action as over 120 girls journeyed by bus to Lake Parramatta Reserve where they spent the day recording the scenery in the style of Monet. After several weeks of rain, it was pleasant to have a lovely sunny day for the excursion, with all the vegetation washed clean by the recent downpours.

Scattered around the riverbank, students worked with a palette of primary and secondary colours on small canvases to capture their images. The experience gave them firsthand knowledge of the issues confronting plein air (outdoor) painters and the quality of light as shadows and highlights change over a day.

Many of the students worked successfully to describe what they saw, working from direct observation and classroom practice in small brushstrokes. Photographs taken of each view then served as a secondary source for the girls to complete their works over the following two weeks back at school.

Congratulations are extended to these budding artists whose wonderful landscapes will be a key component of our annual exhibition during Term 4.







Dobell Drawing School

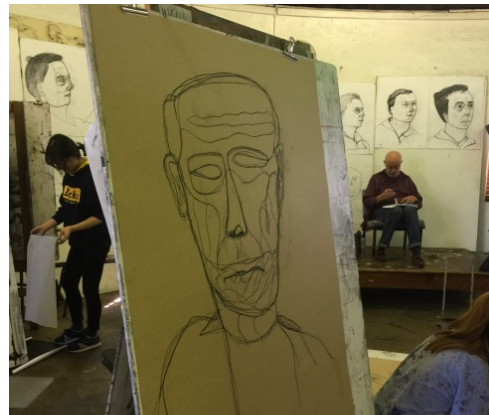
From the 10th to the 14th of April, three Year 11 Visual Arts students (Micah San Pascual, Dustine Dequina and Oana Joya) attended the Dobell Drawing School at the National Art School in Sydney. It was an intensive program which lasted for four days over the school break. The purpose of this event was to create learning opportunities for young, aspiring artists who want to develop their skills and broaden their knowledge. Students were taught by practicing artists who had also once been in the same position that they were in, hoping to pass along their techniques to a younger generation.

The program was a challenging but rewarding experience. We students had no idea what we were in for and were anxious to get started even though it was a little awkward at the beginning. The first day consisted of introductions, with an orientation to start off. We were then divided into our classes and began the four-day journey. It started out with introductions to our classmates and the materials we would be using. We spent most of the four days using charcoal, which gave us the idea that we were not clean enough, as we would randomly spot black marks on our clothing and faces. Each day a different model would come in and we would work on proportions and learning the proper way of drawing physical features realistically. On the final day, an exhibition was held showcasing the artworks which were created over those four days.

Overall, the Dobell Drawing School program was extremely enjoyable and enlightening as we learned different art styles, met new people and discussed ideas on how to improve our skills. This experience truly was incredible, and I would personally recommend this program to those wanting to broaden their horizons and discover new ideas.

Micah San Pascual

*Oana Joya will be returning to the National Art School during the July school holidays for more intensive studio practice.



Hip Hop Dance at the Sydney Opera House

On 26 May, Dance Elective students from Years 9 and 10 as well as members of the BGHS Hip Hop Crew attended a performance of "Cypher", a hip hop dance work. This interactive dance work was performed in a circular space with the audience standing and moving around the performers. The space changed shape and moved to a variety of places during the show. It was an exciting and exhilarating performance for all audience members. During the show, the dancers invited members of the audience to perform in the space with them, and Year 12 Dance student Penina (Nina) Lakei, who is also a Student Leader of the BGHS Hip Hop Crew, performed on stage with the dancers at the Sydney Opera House! She was fantastic and received a huge cheer from the audience and the dancers. After the show, the students participated in a Question and Answer session with the performers.



HSC Dance Masterclass

Congratulations to two senior BGHS Dance students who attended the HSC Dance Masterclasses at the Sydney Dance Company studios this year. At the end of Term 1, Year 11 student **Elisha Nguyen** was selected to attend the HSC Dance Masterclasses and at the beginning of Term 2, Year 12 student **Rachel Kane** was also selected to attend. These master classes are technically and creatively very challenging for students and put them in good stead for their upcoming HSC Dance exams. Rachel will complete her Practical HSC Dance exams in August this year. Elisha will also perform in this year's HSC Dance Practicals as a dancer for the choreography/composition exams of some of our current HSC Dance students.



Synergy Dance Festival

On Tuesday 6 June and Thursday 8 June, the BGHS Dance Ensemble performed in the Synergy Dance Festival at The Evan Theatre in Penrith. The students performed a musical theatre dance routine called “Join the Circus” inspired by the musical *Barnum*.

Congratulations to the following students:

Year 12: Rachel Kane

Year 11: Faith Gonkarnue, Jennifer Latif, Elisha Nguyen

Year 10: Rita-Marie Santoro, Teagan Tensek, Rudrakshi Tripathi

Year 9: Stephanie Freudling

Year 8: Annika Sarkar, Palistha Shrestha, Shanequa Totou

Year 7: Taylor Wilden

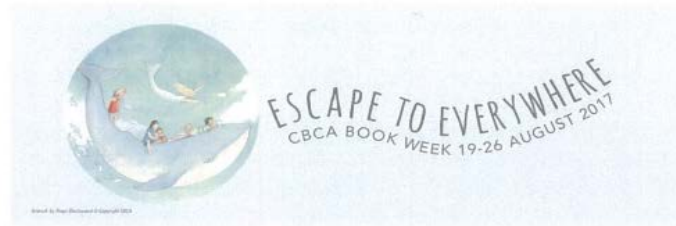


"In Concert" 2017 Mass Choir Performance

On Tuesday 16 May, 16 students from Blacktown Girls High School joined 600 hundred voices to perform at the Sydney Town Hall in the Combined Secondary Schools Choir's annual concert. Our students thoroughly enjoyed the experience to perform a range of significant choral works accompanied by a seventy-five piece symphony orchestra and renowned singer and songwriter Felix Riebl. Congratulations to our dedicated students who put in hours of rehearsals to prepare for this incredible and touching performance.



Be involved in Book Week 2017! "Escape to Everywhere"



Term 3 Week 5, Thursday August 17th- Costume Day

Dress up in your favourite character from Fantasy, Sci-Fi, Cartoons or History. The two best costumes receive movie gift cards.

Term 3 Week 6- Poster Competition

Create a poster in any medium that explains how reading lets you escape. A digital poster may be emailed. See Mrs Ericksen for details. The two best posters receive gift cards.

Check out our Social Media Pages! In case you didn't know BRAG now has a Facebook, Instagram and YouTube Page. We have a special team of students that regularly update and post about upcoming events related to BRAG that you can take part in!

Username:
brag.read

All the Bright Places By Jennifer Niven

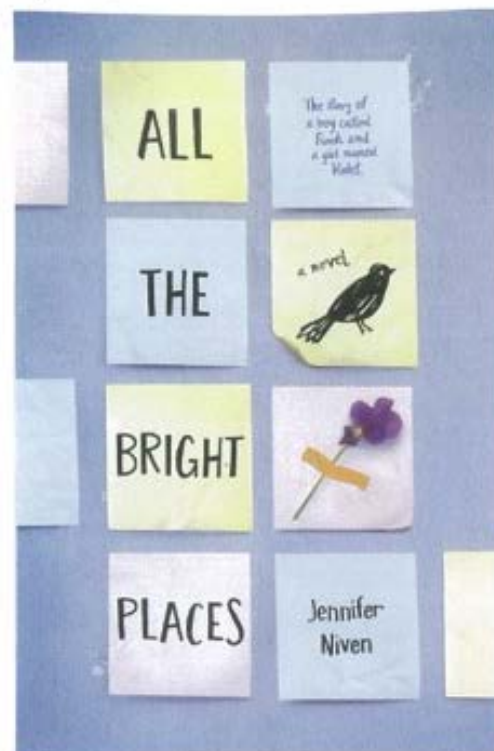
All the bright places is a fictional book that portrays a heart touching story about two suicidal teenagers that meet on top of a bell tower and change each other's lives completely. Violet and Finch discover that together their pain disappears. This tragic story gives the reader an understanding that teenagers have to cope with their own identity, social friendships and family problems.

I really liked that this story was told from different perspectives and how we could recognise each of their thoughts and emotions about one another. Personally, my favourite character is Finch, who plays the main character in this book. He is such a warm-hearted and witty person. The serious circumstances throughout the plot were balanced by humour.

I disliked the ending scene because it was very rushed and didn't explain what each of the characters were feeling at this point in time. For my own satisfaction I needed to know more.

Therefore, I highly recommend this book to teenagers and young adults who are interested in drama and comedy. I also rank this book an 8.5 out of 10.

By Hewan Workineh



THE FAULT IN OUR STARS

DESPITE THE TUMOUR-SHRINKING MEDICAL MIRACLE THAT HAS BOUGHT HER A FEW YEARS, HAZEL HAS NEVER BEEN ANYTHING BUT TERMINAL, HER FINAL CHAPTER INSCRIBED UPON DIAGNOSIS. BUT WHEN A GORGEOUS PLOT TWIST NAMED AUGUSTUS WATERS SUDDENLY APPEARS AT CANCER KID SUPPORT GROUP, HAZEL'S STORY IS ABOUT TO BE COMPLETELY REWRITTEN.

I LIKED THAT THE BOOK HAD LOTS OF QUOTES THAT ARE TRUE AND SOME OF THEM WERE REALLY MEANINGFUL. AN EXAMPLE OF A QUOTE IS, "YOU DON'T GET TO CHOOSE IF YOU GET HURT IN THIS WORLD, BUT YOU DO HAVE SOME SAY IN WHO HURTS YOU."

MY FAVOURITE CHARACTER IN THIS BOOK IS AUGUSTUS BECAUSE HE WAS ALWAYS THERE FOR HAZEL AND HE REALLY LOVED AND CARED FOR HER. HE ALSO WAS A ROMANTIC AND WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR HAZEL.

THE CHARACTERS FELT VERY REAL TO ME BECAUSE IT DIDN'T FEEL LIKE THEY WERE LIVING IN A FANTASY AND THE CANCER THAT THEY HAD DIDN'T MAKE THEM ALIEN, THE CANCER MADE THEM AS HUMAN AS EVERYONE ELSE IS.

THE STORY KEPT ME GUESSING, CAN HAZEL HANDLE IT-WILL SHE DIE, IT ALL DEPENDED ON WHAT DIRECTION THE STORY TOOK.

MY FAVOURITE PART OF THE BOOK WAS WHEN HAZEL AND AUGUSTUS WENT TO AMSTERDAM AND THEY BECAME REALLY CLOSE.

I WAS READING THIS BOOK FOR 4 HOURS STRAIGHT AND I COULDN'T GET UP TO DO ANYTHING ELSE AS THE BOOK AND PLOT TWISTS WERE SO INTERESTING THAT IT FELT LIKE I WAS ACTUALLY IN THE BOOK, HAZEL AND AUGUSTUS FELT SO REAL TO ME!

THERE WAS A REALLY TENSE SCENE WHEN AUGUSTUS AND HAZEL WERE ABOUT TO MEET PETER VAN HOUTEN NOT KNOWING WHAT HE LOOKED LIKE OR WHAT KIND OF PERSON HE WAS.

THE BOOK WAS A VERY EMOTIONAL BOOK THAT MADE ME LAUGH AND CRY.

IT WAS ALSO TRUE TO LIFE. I COULD REALLY BELIEVE IN THE CHARACTERS AND THE PLOT.

THE ONLY NEGATIVE FOR ME WAS THE NUMBER OF DIFFICULT WORDS THAT I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND. IT WAS HARD TO FOLLOW AT TIMES BECAUSE OF THE WORDS.

I WISHED THE ENDING WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN A CLIFF-HANGER BECAUSE THERE WAS SO MUCH POTENTIAL AND THERE COULD'VE BEEN AN AMAZING PART 2 FOR MY LIKING.

I WOULD RECOMMEND THIS BOOK FOR PEOPLE AGED **15-25** AS IT IS FOR MATURE AUDIENCES. I WOULD ALSO RECOMMEND THIS BOOK FOR ROMANTICS. MY RATING FOR THIS BOOK WOULD BE A **4.5** OUT OF **5**.



- RHEA PATHAK

Our Chemical Hearts – A Review by Ambriel Reynolds

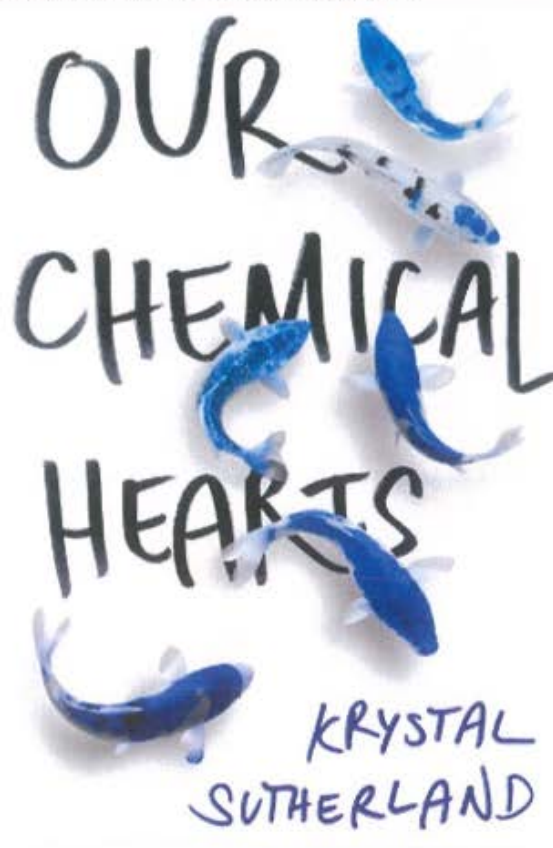
Our Chemical Hearts is a refreshingly realistic atypical teen love story, exploring some fairly serious issues like PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), obsessive guilt and the realities involved in mending a broken heart. The two main characters are Henry Page, our protagonist, and his love interest Grace Town.

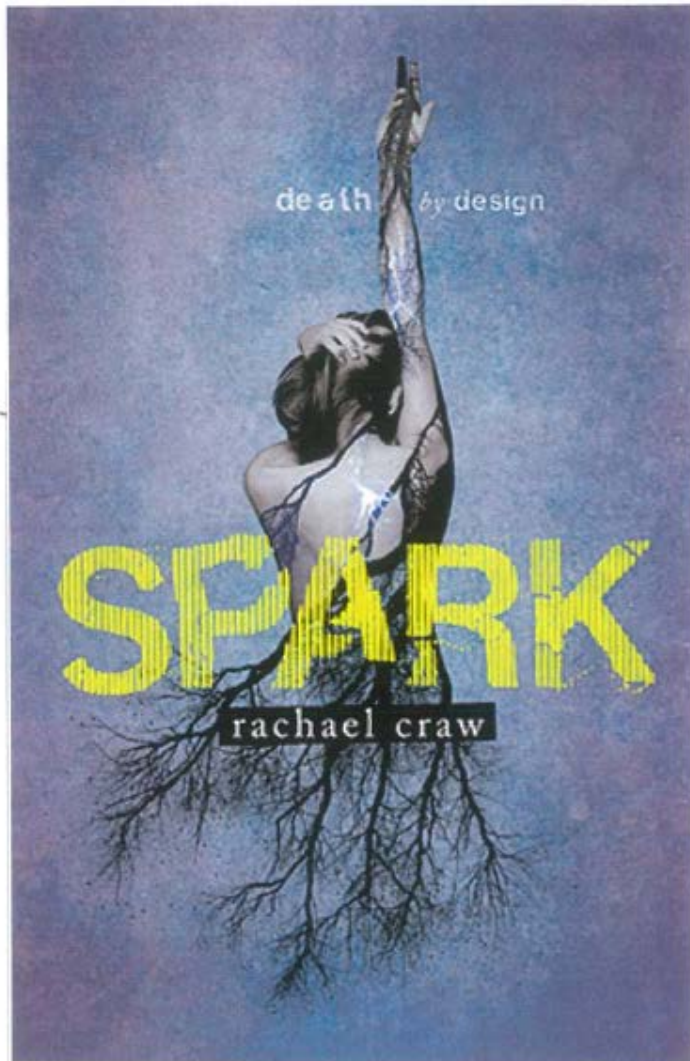
The story follows Henry's first love, which was not really what he expected. Grace certainly wasn't what he imagined for his first love. Henry Page has not really thought about love that much but would describe himself as a hopeless romantic. His main focus is school and his studies.

This all changes when Grace, who walks with a cane, wears mismatched boys' clothes, and takes little care in her appearance, turns up in one of Henry's classes at school one day. At that point Henry's thoughts of school seem to evaporate.

Overall, I think this was a good book, though the ending was not as satisfying as I hoped it would be. The writer seemed to be aiming for a love story less than perfect. Like most real love stories. This caused the ending to feel incomplete as their relationship, the focus of the story, seemed just to fade away.

I think the author is trying to teach us that not all love stories are like romance novels, a perfect love story. I don't really agree with how Henry viewed Grace, as someone who needed to be fixed. Kind of like a broken toy. Also, Grace didn't seek out professional help and Henry didn't really provide continual support to Grace. During the whole relationship, their emotions were not stable at all, again reflecting the reality of relationships in the real world.





Evangeline Everton aka Evie isn't having a fabulous year. At 17 she's been shipped away to live with her aunt Miriam, her mother's twin sister in a completely different city, New Hampshire to be exact.

Not only does she have to deal with her mother's passing, but also a violent growth spurt. With buzzing pins and needles, insomnia, and a lack of appetite, Evie isn't doing well.

And to top it all off, a secret belonging to Miriam will soon belong to Evie too. Evie just like Miriam has altered DNA, due to tampering by a government agency - the Affinity. One of

their experiments went wrong and lead to to the making of people like Miriam and Evie, they call them Shields. Evie is brought into a world where she is bound by DNA to protect her best friend, Kitty, from an unknown killer. And then there's Jamie. Perfect, but untouchable.

Will Evie be able to save her best friend and herself, or will she crumble, taking down the hopes of everyone with her?

What caught my attention was the problems Evie was having to face and how she reacted to them. I was also drawn to the book after reading the first page, I had many questions that needed answers and they would only be found after reading the book.

A couple of things I dislike about this book is that at times it is a bit fast paced and at other times it is too slow. I also find it a bit hard to believe that everything that is going on in the book is happening in the present.

This is one of the books you simply cannot put down, for it keeps you up all night thinking about what happens next. With twists around every corner this book is full of suspense. You can only imagine what's to come in the next 2 books of this adventurous trilogy. This is a book even the pickiest of readers can read, though I would recommend it for teenagers who like science fiction, suspense and a bit of romance.

Personally I was very drawn to this book and would give it 4 and half stars out of 5.

-Pukhraj